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- Crime Victims' Rights
- Gambling, Lotteries,
Raffles
- Protecting Victims
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- Rules for Advertising:
State regulations
- The Court Process:
How the criminal
justice system works
- The Sunshine Law:
State open meetings
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- Consumers, Take
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Click: www.moago.org

or

Call: 1-800-392-8222



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Gambling, Lotteries, Raffles

Missouri's
gambling laws
are defined.

CONSUMER GUIDE

FROM ATTORNEY GENERAL
JEREMIAH W. (JAY) NIXON



GAMBLING, with only a few exceptions, is illegal in Missouri. Those exceptions are restricted and highly regulated.

There are many types of gambling. Promotions that award prizes may be called contests, sweepstakes, lotteries, raffles, drawings or games. It is important to know the law and to understand what elements make a promotion illegal.

Three elements make up an illegal promotion:

- 1 **Prize** is any benefit, cash or property awarded to a winner.
- 2 **Chance** means the winner is chosen by “luck” with little or no skill or ability involved.
- 3 **Consideration** is the exchange of something of value for the opportunity to participate in the game.

LEGAL GAMES

● State lottery

In 1984 Missouri voters passed a constitutional amendment giving the legislature authority to establish a state lottery. The legislature created the Missouri State Lottery Commission, under the Department of Revenue, and authorized the commission to set up the state lottery.

● Licensed bingo

Under provisions of the bingo law (Chapter 313, RSMo), a bingo game may be operated by a nonprofit organization (such as a charitable organization or religious, service

An illegal promotion must have three elements: prize, chance (no skill required) and consideration (must give something of value).

or veterans group) or a fraternal organization that has maintained a membership of at least 20 for five years prior to applying for a bingo license.

There are several restrictions for bingo game operations. Among them:

- A member of a group cannot receive game proceeds or use any proceeds to pay game workers;
- All workers must be volunteers and members of the group for at least two years;
- The bingo license must be displayed during all games; and
- The group must renew its license yearly.

● Raffles, sweepstakes

A raffle is a game in which a participant buys a ticket for a chance at a prize, with the winner determined by a random drawing to take place at a location and date printed on the ticket.

Raffles and sweepstakes are popular money-making efforts. Missouri law is clear, however, concerning which groups may legally sponsor these promotions.

In 1998 Missouri voters adopted a constitutional amendment allowing raffles and sweepstakes to be sponsored by groups recognized under federal law as charitable or religious.

● Games of skill, no-purchase-necessary games

Missourians may legally participate in games or contests of skill or chance where no consideration is required to be eligible for a prize.

Many fast-food restaurants offer no-purchase-necessary games in which consumers can obtain free tickets without a purchase.

● Out-of-state games

Missouri residents may participate in contests or buy lottery tickets in other states if the tickets are not bought in Missouri.

ILLEGAL GAMES

● Internet gambling

Don't be fooled by assurances from Internet gambling operators that it is legal to play online in Missouri. It is illegal for out-of-state gambling operations to offer Internet gambling to Missouri residents.

● International lotteries

Consumers often are lured by “lottery hustlers” by phone or mail to buy chances in high-stakes foreign lotteries. These lottery solicitations violate U.S. law. Most are scams, and many operators never buy the promised lottery tickets but keep the money for themselves. In addition, lottery hustlers may use victims' bank account numbers to make unauthorized withdrawals or use their credit-card numbers to run up additional charges.